



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **PRELIMINARY 2012 CENSUS RESULTS PROVIDE A SNAPSHOT OF NEW YORK AGRICULTURE**

*USDA Releases a First Look at 2012 Census of Agriculture Results*

**Albany, New York, Feb. 20, 2014** – Today the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released the 2012 Census of Agriculture preliminary results providing a first look at state and national data.

The 2012 Census report included information on farm numbers, land in farms and farmer demographics. In New York:

- Between 2007 and 2012, the amount of land in farms in New York increased by less than one percent, from 7.17 million acres to 7.18 million. This small increase reverses a long term trend of acreage declines.
- According to the 2012 Census, principal farm operators are becoming older. The average age of a principal farm operator was 57.1 years, up almost one year since 2007, and continuing a long term trend of steady increase.
- New York had 35,538 farms, down 2 percent in 2012. In terms of farm size by acres, all categories declined except the largest category.
- In 2012, the value of agriculture products sold totaled \$5.42 billion, up 23 percent from 2007. Crop sales were \$2.25 billion and livestock sales totaled \$3.17 billion.

“One of the most important takeaways to remember about the Census of Agriculture is that the information is used for decision-making by producers as well as all those who serve farmers, ranchers and rural communities – federal, state and local governments, agribusinesses, trade associations and many others,” said Blair Smith, State Statistician. “When we look at the data for our state, we can all use it as a snapshot in time to see how New York agriculture is changing over time and how it compared to the rest of the country.”

Conducted since 1840, the Census of Agriculture accounts for all U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. When available in May, the final report will provide even more detailed data on all farm operators and data down to the county level. The publication will also provide new insights into the agriculture industry reporting new or expanded data on Internet access, regional food systems, biomass production, agro-forestry and equine.

For more information about the Census, including access to the 2012 Census of Agriculture preliminary report and the full report when it is released in May, visit [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov).

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